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Inside Information

United States Department
of Agriculture

Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20250

Volume 12, Number 7

COMPILATION OF JULY ITEMS

July 31, 1990

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INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Individual Items are sent electronically throughout the month to offices on the agricultural information network on the Dialcom Incorporated computer system. These items are then printed at the end of the month for distribution to all offices, including those which do not have access to the Dialcom mail network. Any items, comments or inquiries should be sent to Denver Browning, Editor, Programs and Planning, Office of Public Affairs, Room 536A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or send to Browning's Dialcom mailbox AGR209, or call at (202) 447-2058. Communicators with USDA agencies, Land-Grant Universities and State Departments of Agriculture are encouraged to submit items to the editor for inclusion in both the electronic and printed versions.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Although timely in the electronic version, some job announcements may reach you too late in hard copy due to the shortness of deadlines. Our policy is to include all electronic items in the end-of-month hard copy.

NAL DIRECTOR ELECTED PRESIDENT OF WORLD BODY OF AG INFORMATION SPECIALISTS

Joseph H. Howard, director of USDA's National Agricultural Library (NAL) in Beltsville, Maryland, was elected president of the International Association of Agricultural Information Specialists (IAALD) at the organization's World Congress held in Budapest, Hungary. Howard will serve a five-year term.

IAALD, formerly known as the International Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists, is a 700-member body of agricultural information specialists representing over 80 countries. Established in 1955, its objective is the promotion and advancement of public education and information transfer in agricultural development and production, accomplished through international cooperation among members.

Howard has been the NAL director since 1983. NAL, one of three national libraries of the United States along with the Library of Congress and the National Library of Medicine, is the largest agricultural library in the world.

For further information contact: Brian Norris, NAL, 301-344-3778.

NEWEST IN SERIES OF SMALL-SCALE AGRICULTURE ALTERNATIVE FACTSHEETS PUBLISHED

"A Small-Scale Agriculture Alternative—Specialty Flowers," the newest in a series of factsheets, has been published by USDA's Office for Small-Scale Agriculture, Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS).

Prepared by Thomas S. Handwerker of the University of Maryland-Eastern Shore and George Holcomb of USDA's Office of Public Affairs, the new fact sheet discusses the possibilities of growing and selling specialty flowers. These include dried, edible, and even the Victorian technique of candying flowers.

Others in the series have been "Herbs," "Foliage Plants," "Mushrooms," "Sheep," "Wildflowers," "Specialty Vegetables," "Exotic Livestock," "Dessert Vines," "Exotic Fruits," "Goats," and "Woodlots."

CSRS plans to publish others, including one in the works on "Beekeeping," and would welcome suggestions for other topics.

The purpose of the factsheets is to help those who want to explore the possibilities of getting into a small-scale agriculture business. The two-sided factsheets emphasize marketing problems and procedures, try to point out pitfalls and ways to aim for success, and give leads on where to look for help.

For further information, contact George Holcomb at 202-447-5746, or Dialcom E-mail AGR204.

NEW COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAM VIDEOS DESIGNED FOR SMALL-SCALE FARMERS

A new series of eight VHS videos, a joint effort of the Cooperative Extension Programs of Georgia's Fort Valley State College and North Carolina A&T State University, is designed for small-scale, limited-resource farmers.

The series, "Ways to Grow, Money-Making Ideas for Small Farmers," is designed to provide realistic information to help farmers decide whether or not to pursue alternative enterprises.

Each video begins with an overview of what the enterprise involves and the marketing outlook. Farmers and specialists offer tips on management, production skills, marketing strategies, the advantages versus the challenges, and brief descriptions of the resources and labor requirements needed. Each video ends with the name and address of a specialist to contact for additional information.

Videos from North Carolina are: "Commercial Rabbit Production" (10:30), "Growing Landscape Ornamentals" (14:50), "Growing Shiitake Mushrooms" (13:18), and "Woodlot Management" (14:35). Contact: Valorie F. McAlpin, Director, Extension/Research Communications, North Carolina A&T University, P.O. Box 21928, Greensboro, NC 27420; telephone 919-334-7047. Make check payable to North Carolina A&T University CEP.

Georgia videos are: "Meat Goat Production" (11:15), "Commercial Catfish Production" (13:35), "Commercial Vegetable Production" (12:40), and "Growing Forage Crops" (14:55). Contact: John M. Bentley, Extension Communications, Fort Valley State College, P.O. Box 4061, Fort Valley, GA 31030-3298; telephone 912-825-6345. Make check payable to Fort Valley State College CEP.

All videos are \$10 each.

NEW PENN STATE COMPUTER SOFTWARE PACKAGE PROVIDES “EXPERT” TO FRUIT GROWERS

A new computer software package developed by Penn State researchers, will provide users with the knowledge and simulated decision-making process of a wide variety of specialists.

The software, “Penn State Apple Orchard Consultant,” is one of the first expert systems available to fruit growers. Users have available the expertise of plant pathologists, entomologists, horticulturists, meteorologists, and economists. Growers who need advice on how to manage their orchard can bypass the telephone and consult the computer system—the farmer’s almanac of the future.

Developed over a period of four years, the system is more than just a collection of data. According to Dr. James Travis, Penn State associate professor of plant pathology, it’s not just a computerized production guide—it actually helps growers think through a problem. The Apple Orchard Consultant can evaluate information, diagnose problems and symptoms, and recommend action.

Using the software program, growers create a profile of their own orchard. They update that profile daily with information on weather conditions, insects and disease. Presented with a problem, the system considers all the variables and uses its storehouse of knowledge to offer recommendations.

Penn State researchers are working on expert systems for peaches, turf, raspberries, beekeeping, alfalfa, and corn.

For more information, contact James Travis at 814-865-1847.

USDA’S FMHA HAS AN OPENING FOR A SUPERVISORY PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

USDA’s Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) has an opening for a GM-1035-14 supervisory public affairs specialist (Announcement No. 90-105JP), in the Legislative Affairs and Public Information Staff.

Responsibilities include advising and assisting the director and key staff officials in the development, coordination, and execution of overall plans, policies, and procedures for carrying out a comprehensive program of public information at the state, district, and county levels on the Agency’s credit programs and other financial resources.

As chief of the Field Operations Branch, other responsibilities are directing a nationwide program for dissemination of public information through the FmHA field structure of 46 state offices.

Qualifications include experience in or related to the line of work and which has equipped the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the duties of the position.

Contact: Ms. Green, USDA, Farmers Home Administration, Personnel Division, Washington, DC 20250-0700. Telephone is 202-245-5565.

Closing date is July 30.

ACE NORTHEAST REGIONAL MEETING WILL BE HELD IN BALTIMORE, MD, SEPT. 27-29

The Northeast Regional Agricultural Communicators in Education (ACE) meeting will be held September 27-29 at the Holiday Inn Inner Harbor in Baltimore, Maryland.

“Media Mix for Maximum Impact” will focus on the vital issues for communications professionals in the 90s—the merging of computers, publications, graphic design, and video; the redesigning of one-way informational media such as newspapers and Extension publications to be interactive; the transformation of readers into participants by “fax polls” and audiotex; the latest on audience “segmentation,” matching media to audiences, and how to design a successful media campaign on risk issues.

There also will be a choice of optional tours to the National Agricultural Library, Maryland Extension’s new Home and Garden Information Center, a graphic design studio, or a full-service advertising company.

You can choose an optional dinner theater or a night on your own in Baltimore, and included as part of the conference is a Bay dinner cruise on Friday evening.

The program planning committee consists of co-chairs Claire McCabe (U. of Del.) and Bruce Johnson (U. of Md.), plus Colleen Kelly Clark (U. of Md.), Pamela Townsend (U. of Md.), and Doris Crowley (U. of Del.). An advisory committee consists of Holly Ayer (U. of N.H.), LaRae Donnellan (U. of Vt.), Bob Fardelman (U. of Vt.), Mike Gross (U. of Me.), Jerry Kessel (W.Va. U.), Don Schwartz (Cornell U.), and Deborah Shaffer (Penn State U.).

Registration fee is \$125 for ACE members prior to Sept. 4, or \$150 after Sept. 4 (\$200/\$225 for nonmembers).

For more information, call: Bruce Johnson at 301-454-3623 or Claire McCabe at 302-451-1125.

USDA'S CSRS IS PUBLISHING A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ON SMALL-SCALE AGRICULTURE

The Office for Small-Scale Agriculture (OSSA) in USDA's Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS) is publishing "Small-Scale Agriculture Today," a free quarterly newsletter.

Serving as a network for innovative entrepreneurs or would-be small-scale enterprisers, the newsletter features leads on alternative farming.

Howard "Bud" Kerr, Jr., who does a lot of speaking across the country before audiences interested in alternative agricultural practices, is the director of CSRS' OSSA. He invites submissions of topics, technologies, and calendar events for the newsletter.

For a subscription, write to: USDA, CSRS, SPSS, Office of Small-Scale Agriculture, 14th & Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-2200. Telephone is 202-447-3640, Dialcom E-mail is AGS3037 or H.KERR, and FAX is 202-475-3179.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING COMMUNICATION EVENTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

August 5-9:

CASE SUMMER INSTITUTE IN COMMUNICATIONS

University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana

Contact: Lindsay Conn, 202-328-5967

August 22-23:

INTRODUCTION TO REGIONAL PRINTING

Atlanta, Georgia

Contact: U.S. Government Printing Office, 202-275-1283

September 5-6:

FOSE MICROCOMPUTER CONFERENCE/EXPOSITION FOR THE FEDERAL GOV'T.

Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C.

Contact: 703-683-8500 or 800-638-8510

September 6-7:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS REGIONAL WORKSHOP

Quality Inn on the River, Covington, Kentucky

Contact: 502-564-2000

September 27-29:

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATORS IN EDUCATION NORTHEAST REGIONAL MEETING

Holiday Inn, Baltimore, Maryland

Contact: Bruce Johnson, Univ. of Maryland, 301-454-3623

October 19:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS REGIONAL WORKSHOP

El Tropicana Hotel, San Antonio, Texas

Contact: 202-447-6445

December 5-7:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Rosslyn West Park Hotel, Arlington, Virginia

Contact: NAGC, 703-823-4821
